



MONTEREY NEWS

JANUARY 1998
VOLUME XXVIII · Number 1



THE TOWN

River Road Re-opens. River Road has reopened, and its repair was well worth the wait. Not repair, replacement. What a handsome sight it is. The road is much wider and far better graded and topped. The gabions, which hold the hillside and the banks of the stream, are reminiscent of the best of classic Roman architecture. River Road, always a beautiful drive, is now even more so.

Much of the construction work was done under contract with Tryon Construction Company; Leigh Tryon coordinated the work with his own crew and the Town's Highway Department. Dean Amidon was consulted regarding methods of stabilizing the banks of the Konkapot River, and the erosion on the east side of River Road. The tornado of '95 swept through this area destroying trees and the natural terrain of the area. The road has been closed since that time.

Dean Amidon's forty years of experience with the State Highway Department gave him the idea that gabions would finally correct the erosion of the stream bank which has been an insidious problem for years. He told the *Monterey News* that years ago when a dam broke in East Lee and much dirt had washed away, the gabions, installed long before, appeared as surviving and intact. He inquired and found that gabions are available from a company in New Jersey,



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Say cheese! Goat cheese that is. Rawson Brook Farm critters pause for a portrait.

which imports them from Italy; Macaferri Gabions. The Italians started using the gabions hundreds of years ago, hence the redolence of ancient Roman architecture on the banks and hillside of River Road. Gabions are cages of specific sizes and construction that are bound together and filled with rocks. Today the wires are finished with a polyvinyl cover that protects from rust. Though gabions may shift somewhat over years of time and weather, they remain stable.

The total cost of River Road is \$376,000, over \$300,000 of which is funded by the Commonwealth. These funds include help from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the state's highway bonding bills. The Town is very fortunate indeed to accomplish such a work of construction at a greatly reduced cost to Monterey taxpayers. So, Happy New Year - all good news.

Boot Camp or Police Training. Police Chief Gareth Backhaus is enrolled

full-time at the Police Academy in Agawam for five months, beginning December 1. As full-time police chief, Backhaus is required to do this training. Backhaus describes his training as the best in the country, no doubt because of the rigors of the program. First a buzz haircut and gone the mustache, then leave home by 5:15 a.m. to arrive at Springfield Col-

lege in time for morning physical training; weight training, aerobics, and running. From this stimulating experience, Backhaus goes to Agawam for classes, beginning at 9:00 a.m. Classes include criminal law, constitutional law, motor vehicle law, arrest skills, health and wellness of police officers, and much more. Uniforms and boots are inspected routinely and a paper of six pages is due each Monday. He gets home about 6:45 each evening and is back on the road the next morning.

Though Chief Backhaus has lost a lot of hair and sleep, he is very positive about what he will be able to contribute to Monterey as a result of the academy training. His main concern is community policing, which combines police effort with community concerns. One of his other interests is Emergency Medical Training to help serve the Town. Though Backhaus will be trained to take on the most rigorous of police jobs, his concern remains with Monterey. He hopes that he

can work more closely with the Monterey Fire Co.

Help Available for Small Business. On December 15 Keith Girouard of the Community Development Corporation (CDC) met with the Select Board to discuss how the CDC can help to create and maintain jobs by providing training and financial support to businesses in Southern Berkshire County. Though CDC has been in existence for ten years, it has recently revitalized its mission to promote existing and fledgling commercial interests and to help them prepare for the challenges of the 21st century. Mr. Girouard spoke of the electronically operated enterprises of the "information age," many of which are home-based, as ideal for the Berkshires. Many are already operating in the area.

Mr. Girouard described the CDC as a private, non-profit organization of community-minded citizens interested in promoting the area. They

intend to help businesses in three major ways; expansion of existing local enterprises, assistance in the relocation of businesses to this area, and support of start-up ventures. Their support services include demographic surveys, site-location assistance, loan pools, bank assistance, infrastructure assistance, permitting process information, and mentoring service.

More information can be acquired from the Community Development Corporation, Richard Melluzzo, President, Box 33, Great Barrington 01230, 528-7788 or e-mail: cdcbsb@bcn.net

Speaking of the Information Age. Last September 5, a Special Town Meeting approved a by-law placing a moratorium of six months on locating any telecommunications facilities in the Town of Monterey. Recently Town Clerk Barbara Swann heard from the Commonwealth Attorney General's office approving the by-law, but not guaranteeing its consistency with federal law. The moratorium gives the Town time to craft a by-law that will protect the Town from improper placement of cellular towers. Maggie Leonard of the Planning Board made it clear at that meeting that, due to the federal Telecommunications Act, it would be impossible in the long run to say no to the towers.

Miscellany. The Small Cities Project application that Monterey applied for in conjunction with Otis and Sandisfield (*Monterey News*, Sept. '97) has been turned down. This grant would have benefited Monterey primarily in low-income housing rehabilitation and in providing financial assistance for improvement of the Town Hall.

On December 1 the Select Board unanimously approved the Board of Health Water Resource Protection Regulations as amended. Also the Board of Health Well Regulations were approved. A public hearing regarding the regulations was held November 3.

With unanimous agreement the Board appointed Anita Carroll-Weldon to the Historical Commission for a term ending June 30, 2000.

Also the Board unanimously appointed Bill Meier to the Parks Commission for a term ending at the next Town election on May 2, 1998.

The Wilson House Committee continues meeting and planning with Berkshire Taconic Foundation president Virgil Stucker to determine the best uses and opportunities for financial support of the Wilson House restoration.

After a two week holiday break, the Select Board will resume their regular meeting time on January 5.

— Jane Black

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DAFFODIL DAYS

While serving on the Southern Berkshire Board for the American Cancer Society, I realized that "Daffodil Days" was virtually unknown in Monterey — not to mention other surrounding towns. In 1985 I went on a telephone campaign in Monterey and found that everyone was pleased to have the daffodils, and I could sell as many as I had the time to make calls. I sold fifty seven bunches, and had them delivered to the Monterey General Store, where they were nice enough to keep the flowers in their cooler. The bouquets were picked up there.

Over the years I've added helpers, each working in their own area of the town. They all are enthusiastic, and faithful over the years. There are now fourteen helpers. Last year we sold 334 bunches of daffodils and we still haven't reached everyone.

It was exciting to expand to Tyringham last year, thanks to Jane Kessler. Also, we sold some to folks in New Marlborough via Maureen Haugh. I've yet to have success in Otis, but I will keep trying. Look for the American Cancer Society's Daffodil Days again this year. Spread the word. The delivery date this year is March 26, 1998. More Daffodil Days news next month.

— Fran Amidon

HOMESTRETCH FOR VET'S MEMORIAL

Donations are still needed to wind up the fund drive for the Veteran's Memorial. The monuments are ready for installation, and Tryon Construction and South County Joiners will be collaborating to complete the project. The new park, located at the corner of Route 23 and Blue Hill Road, was dedicated last July to honor all Monterey veterans from the Revolutionary War through Desert Storm. We need your help to finish this fund drive. Please make a year-end donation, tax deductible, to the Town Treasurer, Monterey Veterans Memorial, Monterey, MA 01245. Thank you.

— Dean Amidon



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NEW MARLBOROUGH CENTRAL AND MONTEREY SCHOOL

As befits the season, it's been a festive month at New Marlborough Central School (NMC). There have been two holiday-inspired after school activities. Using an assortment of greens, pinecones and beautifully made bows - courtesy of Debbie O'Brien - the children in the third/fourth grade crafted a wreath to take home. In the second activity students made reindeer necklaces from ribbon, miniature clothes pins, felt, beads, bells and baubles. Children from all grades produced terrific looking holiday necklaces. Thanks to Nancy Crawford and Kelly Wilkinson for coordinating these fun activities.

Judy Ladd's first/second grade class visited Catherine's Chocolates to learn how

they make their various confections. I'll bet everyone enjoyed that field trip!

Tom and Ramona Sullivan, parents of Jennifer and Kaitlyn, invited Gloria Clarke and her guide dog to visit with students. The children got first hand knowledge of the valuable relationship between a guide dog and it's owner.

The elementary chorus comprised of third and fourth grade students performed during one of the four holiday concerts at Mt. Everett Regional High School. Fourth grade band members will participate in an upcoming concert in December. A program note states that 381 students participate in the Music Department in third through twelfth grades; forty nine percent of the student body from those ten grades. There are some wonderful voices and instrumentalists to be heard. If you've never been to one of the concerts you really owe it to yourself to go.

Gige O'Connell visited the Monterey kindergarten to talk about time - specifically the Monterey time capsule. After reading the story of Rip Van Winkle to set the mood, she then invited each student to draw a picture for inclusion in the time capsule, which will be opened in fifty years. Will they be as surprised at the changes in the world as Rip was? Only time will tell.

A successful maple syrup and Christmas tree sale has brought more dollars into the coffers of the PTA to fund the great programs and essential materials they bring to our children. Thanks for supporting the PTA.

— Deborah Mielke

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HAS ANYONE HEARD OF EPIPHANY?

January sixth. The Twelfth Day. A Star. Magi. The Greek word means to manifest, to show. Once upon a time, January sixth was a more important holiday (holy day) than the recently celebrated Christmas (or Christ mass).

So what am I driving at? Now that we have generally made a commercial disaster out of Christmas, maybe we should try to focus on what the true meaning of this season is all about.

This season is about the manifestation, the showing of God's light, God's power in Jesus. In a simplistic way, it speaks to the human longing for light in the midst of the shortest and darkest days of the year. However, in a much more powerful manner, the season speaks to profound themes and emotions: hope to joy, darkness to light, God's final shalom - justice, peace, righteousness, and reconciliation. God was in Jesus showing to human beings everywhere (the Magi, stargazers from who-knows-where, are symbolic representatives of us all) that God cares about and for us, intimately and exquisitely.

How so? God assumed our humanity so completely that even our suffering and death was shared. There is nothing in our lives that has not already been entered into by Jesus. It is what "Christ mass" is all about; the birth and death of Jesus. But that is hardly what the reveler on the street wishes to be told. That is why, once Christmas is over, it is time to get on with the business of celebrating Christ mass.

In a sense, we have no idea what we have just celebrated or "done". That is why it is so helpful and refreshing to read these stories about pregnant women (Elizabeth and Mary), bewildered men (Zechariah and Joseph), an illegitimate child (Jesus), innocent shepherds, a jealous king (Herod), a mysterious star, and pilgrim stargazers (the wise men). These stories personify the awe, wonder, and mystery of Christmas. Which, after all, is what this season is all about. Isn't it great to realize that we don't know everything, and we don't need to! God is more interested in having us "know" (as in the

Biblical understanding of sexual intimacy) that we are loved with a great and wonderful love. What a contrast to the recently celebrated holiday which has become an exercise in commercial exhibitionism, at the expense of intimacy. And this person, Jesus, who is "the reason for the season", was not only born, but also died "showing" (remember Epiphany?) just how much you and I are loved by God. Now that is some event to celebrate! So welcome to the other Christ-mas(s)!

— Keith Snow, Pastor
Monterey United Church of Christ



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Went fishing. Had a mess of roasted fish. Worked hard at haying. Use my spare time in reading, sleeping, and going to the City. I love that place.

— Page 53 (words recorded by Elihu Harmon of Monterey, age 21, in 1871)

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GOULD FARM ELECTS OFFICERS

At its recent annual meeting the Board of Directors of Gould Farm elected Allison Stokes, Ph.D. of West Stockbridge as President, Rita Botti Cherubini of Lynn, MA as Vice President, and Claudette Callahan of New Marlborough as Clerk. In addition, Susan Bronson, Ph.D. of Monterey, David Colt of Williamstown, Betsey McKearman of Stockbridge and Virgil Stucker of Great Barrington were elected to the Board.

Allison Stokes has been pastor of the West Stockbridge Congregational Church since 1988. She is a graduate of the University of North Carolina (BA), Yale Divinity School (M.Div.), Yale Graduate School (Ph.D.) and Harvard Divinity School (Th.M.). Dr. Stokes has served as Clerk of the Board and chair of the Nominating Committee. She founded the Women's Interfaith Institute in the Berkshires in 1992, was Chaplain at Vassar College (1982-1985) and Acting Associate University Chaplain at Yale (1985-1987). Dr. Stokes taught at Yale, Vassar, Hartford Seminary and the American College for Girls in Istanbul. She has published several books and is currently at work on a sermon collection entitled "The Preacher as a Change Agent." Commenting on her new role, Dr. Stokes says, "The mission of the Farm has always been an important one, but given the

demands on providers of mental health care today, the Gould Farm community model is especially critical. I feel privileged to lead the Board as we plan for our centennial in 2013. This will be a learning time for me as I am challenged to meet my new responsibilities."

Ms. Cherubini of Lynn, MA is a Lesley College graduate (BS, Organizational Behavior). She held management positions at Middlesex Insurance Company in Westford, MA (1976-1997) and is currently an independent consultant on insurance-related issues. Ms. Cherubini is a member of Gould Farm's Finance Committee and chairs the Development Committee. She is a classical vocalist, a designer of children's clothing and is active in church and civic activities in the Boston area.

Mrs. Callahan, a graduate of St. Joseph's College in Hartford, CT (MS) is Coordinator of the Family Support Network at the Children's Health Program in Great Barrington. She has been on the Board for one year, serving on the Alternative Clientele Committee and the Nominating Committee. Mrs. Callahan is active in church and civic endeavors in Berkshire County and is Land Chairman of the New Marlborough Library Trustees.



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Martin Cherneff joins newly elected Gould Farm board of directors.

Dr. Bronson, a development officer for Five Colleges, Inc., a consortium of colleges in the Amherst area, is a graduate of the University of Michigan (Ph.D. Russian History). Dr. Bronson, a member of the Gould Farm staff from 1982-1985, worked for the Social Science Research Council in New York City from 1991-1997 where she was involved in program management and fund raising. She is on the Farm's Development Committee.

Mr. Cherneff is principal and founder of Monterey-based M.H. Cherneff & Associates, a management consulting firm specializing in high volume employee food service programs and executive/customer dining in the business environment. A graduate of the University of Denver (BSBA), he has lectured on food service at the American Dietetic Association, the American Society of Hospital Food Service Administrators and the Society for Food Service Management where he serves on the board. Mr. Cherneff has held leadership positions with the Lake Garfield Association and the Hupi Woods Association. He is a member of Trout Unlimited and the Fly Fishing Federation.

David Colt returns to the Board after a brief absence. Born and raised at Gould Farm while his parents were members of the staff, Colt served in the United States

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Dr. Susan Bronson assumes post on Gould Farm board of directors.

Marine Corp during World War II. He graduated from Princeton (BA, 1946) and Harvard University Law School (LLB, 1950) and practiced law in Boston until 1987 when he moved to Williamstown and became a partner in the law firm of Grinnell, Dubendorf & Smith where he is currently Of Counsel.

Mrs. McKearnan was Director of Sales Training for Polo Ralph Lauren in New York City prior to moving to the Berkshires full-time in 1991. Preceding her retail career, she worked in professional

theater for ten years as a prop maker for a number of organizations including the New York Shakespeare Festival, The Muppets, The Manhattan Theatre Club and the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

Mrs. McKearnan's opera credits include the Santa Fe Opera in New Mexico and the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, South Carolina. She helped organize the first and only guild for prop makers in the United States which publishes a source book used by theaters all over the world. A graduate of Wellesley College (BA), Mrs. McKearnan currently serves on the board of the Berkshire Theatre Festival where she is a vice president and chair of the Education Committee.

Virgil Stucker, president of the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation (BTCF) in Lakeville, CT, returns to the Board where he serves as Treasurer. A graduate of Ripon College (BA) and Western New England College (MBA), Stucker was a member of the administrative staff at Gould Farm from 1975-1989, then moved to Michigan to develop Rose Hill Center, a program designed after the Gould Farm model. He returned to the Berkshires in 1993 and joined the BTCF. Stucker has chaired and served on the Development Committee of the Farm and currently chairs the Finance Committee. He is actively involved in area civic and church organizations.

"Such a well-qualified and dedicated

group of new directors will serve us well as we pursue some rather aggressive goals between now and our centennial in 2013. I very much look forward to working with everyone", commented Gould Farm Executive Director, Brian Snyder.

Gould Farm is a 600-acre residential treatment facility off Route 23 in Monterey with additional programs in the Boston area. The farm has an eighty four-year history of providing respectful treatment for people with mental illness, regardless of the limits of their financial resources. During each of the past three years the Farm has provided more than \$1 million in uncompensated care. The Farm will celebrate its 85th anniversary in 1998.

— Rita Kasky

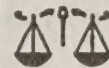
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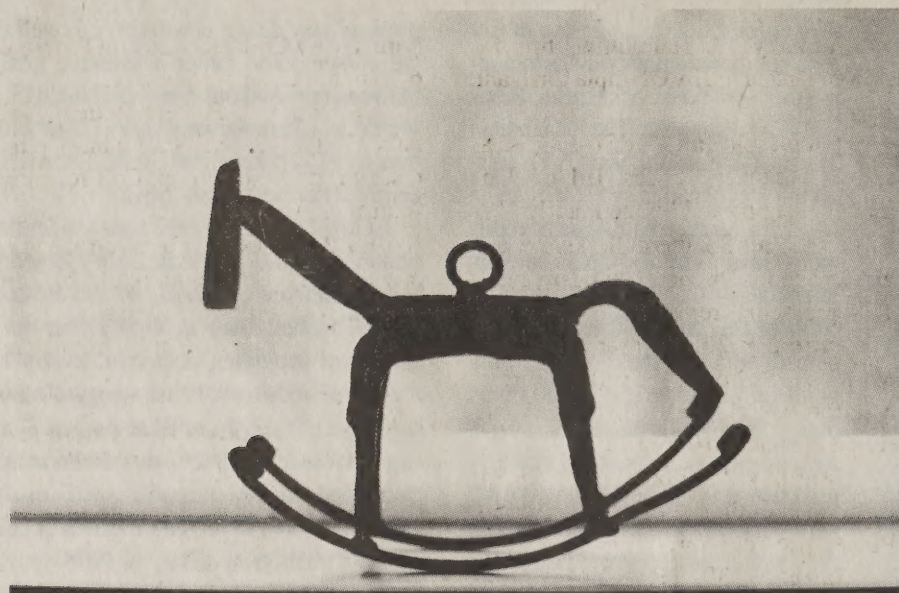
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THE FAMILY NETWORK/ CHILDREN'S HEALTH, INC.

The Family Center is located at 940 South Main Street, Great Barrington, call 528-0721 for more information. All activities are at the Family Center, unless otherwise noted.

We are fortunate to have a local chapter of Parents Anonymous that meets on Wednesday evenings from 7:30-9:30 p.m. This self-help group is useful for parents experiencing stress in their lives and some difficulty parenting. It is facilitated by James Monsonis. For more information please call 1-800-882-1250, or call the Family Center.

We have a volunteer who is working on the lending library files, and contacting people who may have overdue books or videos. Please be sure to mark your card when you return an item to the library. We are seeking "Once Upon A Potty" videos. Does anyone know where we can order new ones?

How to be a great grandparent.

Some tips for grandparents: give your kids a night off by baby-sitting; lend a sympathetic ear - but don't give advice unless asked; call each grandchild at a set time each week, for a special phone visit. These are just a few of the suggestions from the pediatrician Dr. T. Barry Brazelton and Ann Brown, Head of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, in a new booklet by Pampers Parenting Institute called, "A Grandparent's Guide to Family Nurturing and Safety." It's free from the Consumer Information Center, Dept. 80, Pueblo, CO. 81009.

We are entering a time of cabin fever. For the uninitiated, this is a time in the winter, when families can be housebound due to bad weather and sicknesses. It is real, believe me! Parents may get a little testy and children get a little frisky. Try to get the children out each day if it is not below freezing. Put on a record or the radio station and let them dance around. Be sure you dance around too. The exercise will help to relieve tension. We have a booklet of ideas to combat cabin fever compiled by mothers a few years ago. For a donation of \$5.00, you may purchase this prescription for cabin fever. It is also a time that you might want to go to more than one playgroup, or drop-in time, if the weather permits. Keep a friend's phone number handy so you can support one another.

Parent To Parent Volunteer Program. Trained volunteers are available to assist families in which there is a pregnancy or a child under three years old, with the following items: transportation to appointments and playgroups, emotional support, and information about area services. If you are interested in being a volun-



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teer or in having a volunteer help you, please contact Claudette Callhan.

Fathers' Program News. A small group of fathers will begin meeting in January and February with Nicholas Emmanuel, Licensed Social Worker, to do some in-depth anger management. This is a follow-up of the recent series of father's program classes. Regular father's meetings will continue on Monday evenings. New fathers are welcomed. One can obtain more information by contacting Tony Luttenberger at the Family Center.

Here is our calendar.

Drop-in times at our Great Barrington location: Mondays noon-2 p.m.; Tuesdays and Fridays 3-5 p.m.; Wednesdays and Thursdays 10 a.m.-noon. **January Saturday drop-in times:** January 10, 17, 31 from 10 a.m.-noon. **Drop-in times at the Otis Town Hall** (second floor): Thursdays 10 a.m.-noon.

Every Monday and Friday, Play and Learn Group for three and four year olds, registration required 9 a.m.-noon. No meeting January 2.

Every Monday, 7 p.m. Fathers Group meeting.

Every Tuesday, Mother-Baby exercise class, 11 a.m. pre-registration required.

Every Wednesday and Thursday, Parent Child Playgroup 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. Families are encouraged to attend any playgroup. Call for playgroup schedules in other towns.

January 6. Support group of licensed day care providers 7 p.m.

January 6. Sandisfield Parent Child playgroup, **change of schedule**, will meet on Tuesdays from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. following the school schedule. Join in the "Today is New Year's" celebration, a lunch will be provided and there will be activities. Everyone welcome. Contact Loren Kinnaman, Playgroup Leader, for more information

January 14, 21, 28, February 4, 11. Parent to Parent Volunteer Training 2-4 p.m. For application, Contact Claudette Callhan.

January 15 and 29. "Play Listening" a program to better communicate with your child through play, led by Maggie Sadoway 6:45 p.m. Please pre-

register. Childcare is available.

January 19. Haircutting tips for children's hair led by Olympia Casivant, 1 p.m.

January 20 and 27. ESL-English as second language classes, led by Jana Laiz. Co-sponsored by the Family Network and the Southern Berkshire Regional School District. Childcare available, please pre-register.

January 23. Winter Picnic at McKee School, Gould Farm, Monterey. Bring a sled. Stories, activities, snack, 10 a.m.

January 24. Pizza and play for fathers and their children, 11 a.m. Please pre-register.

January 30. New Year's luncheon for families who had a birth in 1997. Location to be announced. Please call to register.

February 4. Learning About a New-born, led by Children's Health Program, 6:30 p.m. Please pre-register.

February 7. Fathers Retreat, Kripalu Center, Lenox, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m., discount price for group. Call for more information.

CPR classes are offered on a regular basis at Fairview Hospital, call 528-0790 and ask for Ann Marie Hamm.

— Happy New Year!

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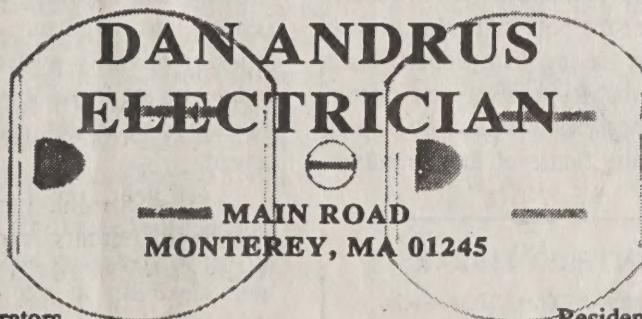


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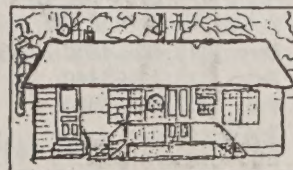
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-- Matthew Brewer, a Roadside regular

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SENATOR SAYS

Season's greetings to all and best wishes for the New Year.

Agricultural preservation program. The Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture celebrated the twentieth anniversary this year of its Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) program. Since 1977, the state has spent \$9,886,925 through this program to protect 6,752 acres of prime agricultural land in this senatorial district. (Statewide, over 40,000 acres have been preserved.) The APR program is the nation's oldest state farmland preservation program. The APR program in Massachusetts has served as a model for other states in assisting family farms to remain viable by purchasing development rights from owners of prime farmland. A restriction is placed on the deed for the property, ensuring that the land will not be used for non-agricultural uses in the future. Farmers benefit by receiving cash for the potential value of their land and by having their property taxes reflect the restricted use of the property. The Commonwealth benefits by helping to ensure the future of the agriculture

industry, which is an important economic base in many small towns in western Massachusetts. The program also preserves community character and scenery. Because there is so much demand for limited state APR funds, the Department of Food and Agriculture has a long list of farmers who would like to sell their property rights as funds become available in the future.

A helping hand for clean water. The federal Safe Drinking Water Act, first enacted in 1974, empowered the Environmental Protection Agency to set maximum contaminant levels for health-threatening microbes and chemicals that could find their way into drinking water supplies. This twenty three-year old legislation was created to protect the public health, but it came with a substantial price tag. In big cities, rate increases can be spread across a large number of customers. Some small water systems, however, are also faced with substantial construction and operating costs to bring systems into compliance. The communities or privately owned local water companies are forced to assess costs of thousands of dollars per household served.

Last year, the U.S. Congress amended the federal Safe Drinking Water Act to give states and communities more flexibility in meeting the law's stringent requirements for testing and treating water supplies. The measure also allows the EPA to target its regulatory program on the most serious and prevalent contaminants, and to give the smallest systems some breaks to make

compliance more affordable. The law also emphasizes wellhead protection and pollution prevention measures, rather than water treatment. Land-use restriction near reservoirs and improved farming methods have been implemented in some states to reduce the cost of protecting water supplies.

The federal reauthorization of the Safe Drinking Water Act also makes available more federal money for state loan programs to help communities finance drinking water improvements, including more than \$27 million of new funds for Massachusetts in FY98. The current State Revolving Fund (SRF), administered by the state's Department of Environmental Protection, finances forty to fifty projects annually with grants for fifty percent of project costs (which is the approximate equivalent of a zero percent loan for twenty years).

In addition to applying to the State Revolving fund, communities can also apply to the federal Rural Development office for grants and low-interest loans for capital improvement to water and sewer systems. Some towns in the district, such as Otis, Charlemont, and Monroe, have also been successful in obtaining block grants for infrastructure through the competitive Small Cities/CDBG program.

I am very sympathetic with the communities and rate payers facing the burdens of upgrading, replacing or building new infrastructure to protect water supplies. I have worked with Congressman Olver and state representatives to analyze issues and provide federal and state resources for water projects in Monroe, Charlemont, Hinsdale, Lenox, and North Adams, among others. Please feel free to contact my district office if your community would like more information on resources which can reduce the costs of improving your local water system.

The DEP web site offers additional background on the SRF program. Among other sources, this article drew on "The Price of Potability", an article appearing in the current issue of *Governing* magazine. I would happily provide a copy of the article to interested readers.

—Senator Andrea F. Nuciforo, Jr.

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REP RAP

At the last minute on November 19, 1997, just hours before the mandated recess of the Massachusetts General Court, the House and Senate rushed through a compromise electric utility deregulation bill intended to introduce competition and drive down consumer costs for electric power in the Commonwealth.

Massachusetts has the sixth highest electric rate in the country. Deregulation of this industry is vital to our ability to compete for industry, and to assure our residents safe energy at reasonable costs. For that reason, I voted in favor of the House version of the electric deregulation bill that passed in early November. However, the Senate failed to include the same degree of consumer protection in its version. The resulting compromise bill that was passed in haste at the last hours of this year's legislative session weakened the necessary provisions for consumer protection. The final legislation will not work as intended for many Massachusetts power consumers; particularly customers of companies burdened with paying for costly nuclear generation plants owned by companies such as Northeast Utilities.

The bill states that a ten percent rate decrease will be realized by March of 1998, and another five percent a year and a half later. Unfortunately, industry lobbyists were able to secure language in the final compromise bill that will sabotage the intended rate reductions. The final bill includes language that will allow companies to recover 'stranded costs' from consumers. 'Stranded costs' is the nice way of saying bad investments like the nuclear generation plants. All versions of the bill included an audit before these costs could be passed on. However, the audit outlined in the final bill does not have the strength of the original House bill. These weakened audit requirements will result in more 'stranded costs' reaching the consumer's pockets.

The electric utility industry has succeeded in railroading the Massachusetts consumer into covering the losses they incurred due to poor management. In corporate America, or everywhere else

in the world for that matter, poor management decisions result in lower returns for investors and retributions to corporate executives. However, for the electric utility industry in Massachusetts, the stock holders can celebrate and the CEO's can be assured that their million dollar salaries and bonuses are secure. With the passing of this bill, this industry was handed the "get out of jail free" card.

These stranded costs stem directly from losses incurred by some electric companies in their haste to develop nuclear powered generating facilities. Therefore, some consumers will fare better than others depending on their supplier. Unfortunately, the competition introduced by the legislation will not allow the consumer to choose between actual delivery companies at first. Therefore, a neighborhood serviced by one company may benefit from the ten percent reduction in costs, while the next neighborhood may be burdened with stranded costs hidden within what will be called a 'wire charge'. This will create huge inequities across the state. We have two electric companies serving Berkshire County. One of them, Northeast Utilities, has four off-line nuclear power plants that are costing them tens of millions of dollars to sit idle. You can bet that their customers will face wire charges that will far outweigh any reduction in delivery costs.

It has been estimated that recovery of these stranded investments will cost each Massachusetts consumer \$2,000-\$3,000. That constitutes a public bail-out of a company's poor choice to invest in

unsafe, non-renewable sources such as nuclear energy. The point of deregulation is to lower costs, not subsidize inefficiency. Therefore, despite the need for deregulation, I could not in good conscience support a bill that would undermine its own intent and subsequently cost consumers even more.

— Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins

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Power lunch Monterey style. Rawson Brook Farm inhabitants pause over a bite of bark from a tree provided for their chewing and climbing pleasure.

©JANE BLACK



The art of the road. A closer look at the gabion construction on River Road.

WALKING IN WINTER ON HUPI

(For Al King)

*Walk through the engraving
of woods in the winter
reading runes in every branch
(endless eloquence!)
make choices of grey and white,
black and light
somber, I say; sober, say they
tracks in snow
lead nowhere
with my white hair I am invisible
kin to the season
my staff greets the saplings
translates their lively words
the quick from the dead
to my trembling hand
then we turn the corner
there it stands
oh, that winterberry bush!
frond fractals of thick tumbling
frosted red
hushed, I stop to hear this scarlet cheer
hard to walk when old and cold
but worth it -
might even make it through another year.*

— A.O.Howell

MT. DESERT, MAINE

*White answers to white at night
balm to calm*

*like a veil
the Milky Way
wraps around all personal sorrow
renders wounds to universal
subject some tomorrow
to a cauterizing sun*

*together, together the stars of panoply
in me and in you-*

*I learn that they are one
and we the same*

*for now nothing
no one
is to blame*

*white answers to white at night
calm to balm
healing light begun.*

A.O. Howell

WILDLIFE SURVEY

The snow continues to be the essential fact in a survey of our natural history in November/December. The ice that was laid down first, in a freezing rain, is still there underneath the layers of snow that followed. In this month of consistently cold weather there has been no real thaw except on the slopes facing south. This is when the activities of our mammalian wildlife are revealed in detailed messages signed with the various imprimaturs of each species. Here is a note from winter camp by one mouse: "Hi Mom, having a wonderful time. I ran from stump to brush pile twenty-five times. This message looks like a lot of us, but it's just me. Your loving offspring, Woodmouse."

Tracks reported: mouse, mole, vole, muskrat, beaver, mink, marten, weasel, squirrels (red, gray and black), raccoon, otter, porcupine, coyote, fox, bobcat, deer (everywhere), mountain lion. Chipmunks, skunks, and bears are hibernating and flying squirrels don't share in the winter visibility since they swoop from tree to tree and don't spend much time on the ground.

The mountain lion. The mountain lion, also called panther, puma painter, and cougar has not yet been officially acknowledged in the Berkshires by the Department of Fish and Wildlife, but the *Berkshire Eagle* of Dec. 14 reports a sighting in Monterey by a hunter from Dalton, William B. Kirby. He saw the animal on Dec. 1, very clearly, and two days later saw fresh tracks near the same

spot. The location wasn't given so we can all imagine this magnificent creature in our own part of Monterey. Other sightings, reported in the region, are fortified by this one.

Unusual coyote behavior. Dean and Fran Amidon heard, from the brother-in-law of Scott Phelps, that when he was still-hunting in their woods for deer, a sound made him look around and there, not fifteen feet away, were two coyotes "charging" him. He jumped up, fired a random shot, and the coyotes ran off. This is so unusual as to be almost unheard of. A possible explanation might be that the hunter was making use of deer lure and was sitting so still the coyotes didn't see him as they ran up to investigate. Dale Duryea had a coyote come right up and look into his blind where he was sitting, using turkey lure.

The black squirrel mentioned above was seen by the Amidons at their place, this month. Some of these, from Europe, escaped from a zoo in Springfield several years ago and seem to be thriving in the wild. They have been reported in Westfield and Otis and now here, so they can be counted amongst the wildlife of the Berkshires.

Porcupine eating acorns. At dusk on Dec. 7 a half-grown porcupine was searching industriously for acorns on the south slope by Dowd Brook at the east end of town. She held the acorns up to her mouth, as a squirrel does, shelled and ate them. She ignored David McAllester, standing twenty feet away, for some time, but finally went up a small hemlock tree

and, hanging on impossibly high, calmly pulled twigs to her mouth and went on with her meal.

Beaver response to the draw-down. The beaver community at the east end of Lake Garfield have made several lodges in the marshy land on the edge of the lake. They have also made burrows in the south bank of Burke's Canal. This fall, as the draw-down exposed the entrances, they set to work on their long dam in the Fargo Swamp, raised the level of their home pond and intensified their food cutting, especially of alder, all through the swamp. They must have homes in the pond.

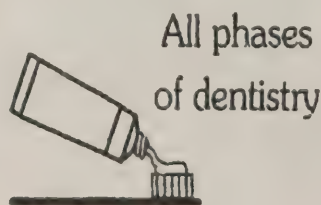
A lavender moth. On one of the few warm days since the snow first arrived, Nov. 27th, there was a small moth fluttering along at the edge of the woods at the east end of Hupi Road.

Evergreen. In addition to the pines and hemlocks that keep the Berkshires green for considerable areas, there are humbler plants that do their part as well. These include the Christmas ferns, on sunny south-facing banks in the woods, the polypody ferns on rocks, especially big ones, and the watercress where there is running water and sunlight.

Some recent birds. Dale Duryea heard, and then saw a golden eagle on the point at Parker's Cove opposite Bullhead Rock; a ruffed grouse, right near the house, a sea gull on the lake, Cooper's and red tailed hawks, Canada geese in the lake before it finally froze clear across.

— David P. McAllester

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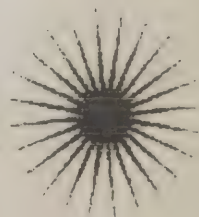
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MULTIPLE LAND-USE: THE WINTER GARDEN

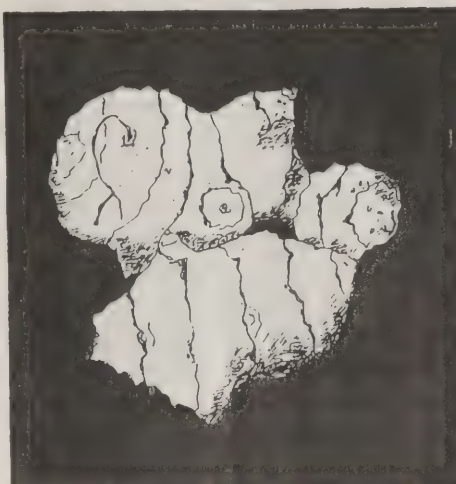
Winter is not yet officially upon us, but the ground in my garden is definitely frozen. I know this because a few days ago Sudi and I went up to dig the Jerusalem artichokes, a thing I had been planning to maybe skip. I had been waxing philosophical and accepting about certain end-of-season chores which I had not gotten to (I was thinking “been spared”) because of early snowfall and freeze-up. Digging the jeroosies (as we call them) was one. I had already imagined and accepted the reality of a winter without their nutty crunchiness, without being able to scrub up a bagful to give to Dad now and then, without adding them to our vegetable mash.

My '97 jeroosie policy underwent 180-degree revision on Thanksgiving when I was in New Jersey for a Baker family get-together. We were having a kind of conventional time of it when out of the kitchen came Fred, my brother-in-law, with a plateful of sliced up Jerusalem artichokes plus dip! At the time I was the only person in the room besides Fred who even knew what the potato-ish little tidbits were, and the minute I chomped one up I knew I had to get back to the garden with a pick-axe. Fred's life and mine are about as different as two people's lives could be, but our orbits come together in our love of vegetable gardening and I thank my lucky stars he was there to remind me that I needed to get back up into mine, right away.

We'd had a day of upper-thirties and sun, but this had not softened the three-inch crust of frozen earth on the jeroosie bed. Sudi and I took a couple of buckets up and I began chopping. I kept thinking of Cora's favorite Christmas song: “In the bleak mid-winter, frosty wind made moan. Earth lay hard as iron, water like a stone.” Pretty soon I had cut loose a chunk of that iron earth and together we levered it up.

“Plate tectonics!” Sudi yelled as she shifted the huge chunk of crust. Underneath was soft, aromatic garden, sandy and loose with potato-y treasures here and there. We set to work and I thought of Fred down in Pennsylvania where he lives, with his clay soil and his warmer climate. He is an incredibly busy guy with a demanding, high-powered job. I imagine the reason he does so well at it is

thanks to some kind of orderly, disciplined approach to life, and I can't picture him waiting until the ground has frozen to get his root crops in. I don't chastise myself for not being more like Fred—I just notice that it can wind up being harder my way.



Jerusalem artichokes.

B. MCA

We got two buckets filled before frozen fingers and toes drove us in. When we left the garden the bed in the upper left corner looked more like a bomb crater than a fault line. In fact, we'd had help from the dog. Banjo had assumed his dirt digging days were over, maybe permanently (I doubt he has the picture of seasonal cycles). Imagine his ecstasy when he realized there was loose dirt, a bottomless bed of it. He'd been amusing himself with frozen apples in the orchard and trotted over with one in his jaws to see what we were up to. Pretty soon he was thrashing in the dirt, sending plumes of it in all directions, like a snowblower gone berserk. He plowed, he rolled, he

chomped. There was mud on his crazy smile when he would stop for an instant before dashing off to run circles and come back again. I saw Sudi looking speculatively at the dirt pile, the crater. “He makes it look like such fun,” she said. The next thing I knew, my long, tall thirteen-year old daughter was rolling in the dirt!

We got the jeroosies in. I still go to the garden every day as we move along to some of our other uses of the place. The Brussels sprouts stand hard as iron, but you can break them off and bring them in. They are at their sweetest and best now. I take the dog out and toss the fetch toy for him, down the hill so he has to run back up. The idea is to wear him out so he doesn't explode in the house during his hunting-season confinement. At first I felt a little foolish standing there robotically working for the dog, but now it feels more like a meditation. I look around at tracks, at the frozen apples and pruning problems for next spring. I think about the next garden, what kind of tomatoes to grow, where to put the pole beans.

The obvious use we make of the garden land is during our short growing season when we plan and dig, water and weed, watch the green things prosper and bloom. Then suddenly it is over and the more subtle uses begin: the garden as meditation place, full of dreams and memories; the garden as star-gazing spot (because everywhere else around here is too thick with trees); the garden as track album and winter feeding station for deer and mice; the garden as dog therapy center; the garden as the place where I can go at this time of year and I don't have to do anything right now.

— Bonner J. McAllester



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A portrait of Frances Brett in her garden, by Lyman Thomson, August 1995.

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FRANCES BRETT

Mrs. Frances Brett, 97, of 259 East Pleasant St., Amherst, and 74 Brett Road, Monterey, died December 20 at Elaine Health and Rehabilitation Center in Hadley.

Born in West Otis on September 6, 1900, she was the daughter of Ralph and Mae Cutting Langdon, a graduate of Lee High School, and attended the former North Adams State Teacher's College.

Mrs. Brett was an elementary school teacher in Otis and Monterey until her marriage to the late George Brett. In Monterey she taught at the former Co-rashire School. The school house still stands today and is located on the south side of Route 23, approximately half mile east of Blue Hill Road. To get to work she would ride her horse from West Otis to a barn on the corner of Blue Hill Road and Route 23. After stabling her horse she would then walk to the school house, build a fire, thaw some water, and prepare for the student's arrival. When the weather was too bad for the stage from Great Barrington to get through to Monterey and Otis, Brett would carry the mail to the towns on horseback.

After her marriage Frances Brett and her husband ran a dairy farm until their retirement. Active in community affairs, she belonged to the Grange and was a member of the School Committee. Mrs. Brett loved the land and being outdoors, and could often be found "relaxing" working in her garden. Her daughter, Marjorie Brett Day, said that she was happy to be able to spend summers in Monterey, thanks to the help of friends and neighbors, mostly notably the Thomson family, along with the Rockwells and the Ohmans.

Frances Brett leaves her daughter, Marjorie Brett Day, with whom she resided; two granddaughters, and three great-grandchildren. Gifts in her memory may be sent to the Monterey Meeting House Campaign, P.O. Box 182, Monterey, MA 01245, or to the Dakin Animal Shelter, P.O. Box 664, Amherst, MA 01004-0664.

P.O. BOX 9, 01245

To the Editor of the Monterey News:

In response to a recent article in the Town News section of the *Monterey News*, where Roger Trucking was accused of not recycling at the Monterey transfer station nor "elsewhere," Roger Trucking has a few things to say:

1. We do recycle and use the town transfer station in Monterey.

2. We send two trucks to Monterey on a weekly basis; one for rubbish and one for recycling.

3. If the Town of Monterey had followed through with the agreements made at the last meeting between the Select Board and Roger Trucking, Monterey would be getting all of the recycling collected from our Monterey customers.

4. Naughty! Naughty! *Monterey News*. Make sure you have the facts correct before printing slander against others.

Sincerely,

Robert W. Brownson, President

THE OBSERVER

November 25 - December 25

High temp. (12/16)43.9°
Low temp. (12/22) 3.7°
Wind-chilled low temp (12/14)18.4°
Avg. high temp.34.3°
Avg. low temp.20.8°
Avg. temp.27.6°
Precip. occ.12 days
Snowfall14.3"
High bar. press. (12/22)30.28
Low bar. press.(12/1)29.25
High wind gust (11/27)47 mph

©SUSAN MCALLESTER



Wayne Dunlop and Jeff Hamilton ice fishing, Lake Garfield, 1983.

SUSAN MCALLESTER MEMORIAL PHOTO CONTEST

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1. THOU SHALT NOT pour greases, fats and oils down any drain.
2. THOU SHALT NOT attach a garbage disposal to your sink for ridding thyself of meat bones, coffee grounds or other foods that are difficult to biodegrade.
3. THOU SHALT NOT dispose of paints or household chemicals in the drain (yea verily, THOU SHALT use disinfectants in small amounts).
4. THOU SHALT NOT dispose of any automobile fluids down any drain, be it gas, oil, transmission or brake fluid, grease or antifreeze.
5. THOU SHALT NOT kill the beneficial bacteria in your septic system by rinsing pesticides, herbicides or any other toxins down the drain.
6. THOU SHALT NOT dispose of any non-biodegradable item in your toilet, be it cigarette butts, disposable diapers or feminine hygiene products.
7. THOU SHALT NOT let water run while washing dishes or thawing frozen foods, and shall consider limiting flushes.
8. THOU SHALT NOT run half loads in the dishwasher or washing machine and shall stagger wash loads.
9. THOU SHALT NOT use chemicals to "start up" or "clean up" your system, yea, they could harm the septic tank, drainfield or groundwater.
10. THOU SHALT NOT attach "clean water" sources such as foot-ing or sump pumps to the septic systems.

These were adapted from Burkes and Minnis' book, Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems.

STEFAN GROTZ

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PERSONAL NOTES

Birthday greetings go out to **Don Welsch** on January 3, to **Joshua Gardner** on January 4, to **Barbara Tryon** on January 5, to **Spencer Pope** on January 9, to **Cindy Hebert** on January 10, to **Jim Deloy** on January 11, to **Julian Mendel** and **Nadine Stoner** on January 13, to **Bridget Mendel** on January 15, to **Laura Dinan** on January 22, to **Shelly Bynack** on January 26, and to **Andrew Gardner** on January 27.

Happy Anniversary to **Karl and Shirley Quisenberry** on January 1, to **Don and Carol Welsch** on January 5, to **Rick and Debbie Mielke** on January 9, and to **Rod and Jeri Palmer** on January 23.

A very happy New Year to all our readers, and please send me any news and greetings you want to share or have me pass on to friends and family. As always, you may send your news and greetings to me, Ann Higgins, at P.O. Box 351, Monterey, MA 01245, or call me at 528-6691, if possible before the twelfth of each month.

— Ann Higgins

CALENDAR

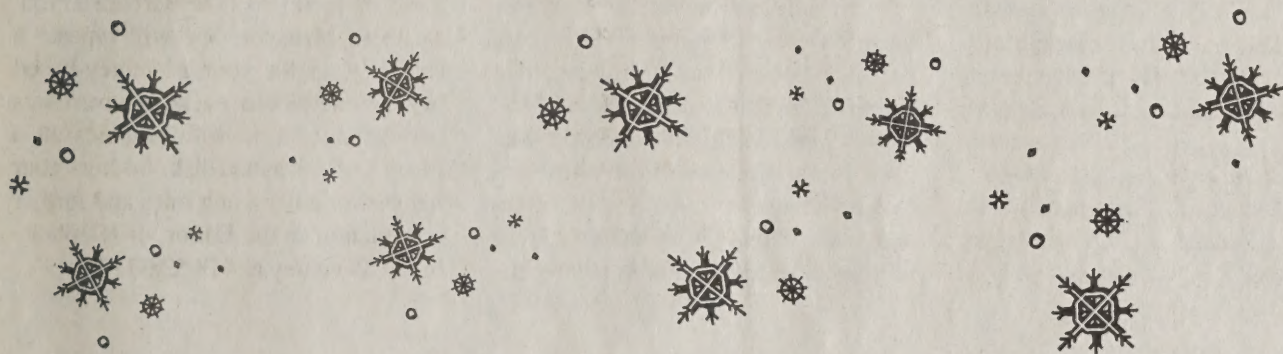
Sundays. AA meetings 9 a.m., in the Monterey Firehouse, Main Road.

Friday, January 23, Winter picnic at McKee School 10 a.m., Gould Farm. Bring a sled. There will be stories, activities, and a snack.

Monday, January 19, No Select Board meeting in observance of Martin Luther King Day.

Saturday, January 24, Square and Contradancing at the Sheffield Grange, Route 7, Sheffield, Mass. Music by Mountain Laurel, calling by Joe Baker. All dances are taught and beginners and children are welcome. Refreshments served at intermission. Adults \$5, children \$2. Information: 413-528-9385 or 518-329-7578 (8:30 - 11:30 p.m.).

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AND BEST WISHES FOR 1998
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Our editorial address is *Monterey News*, P.O. Box 9, Monterey, MA, 01245. We invite letters, articles, drawings, and photographs from readers. Please send submissions (on Macintosh disk if possible) by the fifteenth of the month before publication, addressed to the attention of the Editor. Send any change of address, or initial request to receive the

News by mail (free!) to Barbara Tryon, Business Manager. We will typeset a text-only ad for your Monterey-based business, service, or event, or advertisers may submit an ad with graphics on a Macintosh formatted disk. Address your request for advertising rates and further information to the Editor, or telephone her in Monterey at 413-528-1170.

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Contributions from local artists this month: Bonner McAllester, p.15.

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